CHAPTER IX

THE SURVEYED VILLAGES

Sex Ratio and Literacy:

The inquiry was limited to 19 villages which will be referred to as 'Survey Villages' after this. The Survey Villages had 498 households and a population of 2846 people. The sex ratio was found to be 1039 males for every 1000 females. 34.68% of the population was below the age of 14 years. Some more details are given below:

Table II-9.1

THE POPULATION OF SEX RATIO OF THE SURVEY VILLAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belt</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males to 1000 Females</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Children below 14 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1106</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>1326</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 2846 1450 1396 1039 1859 987
Belts (65.32) (34.68%)

Six villages had schools with 215 students. The highest class in the schools was Class III.
Only 2.8% of the entire population of the 19 villages were literates in the sense that they could read and write a simple letter. Literacy rates were 1.6% in Belt I, 2.6% in Belt II and 6.1% in Belt III. Belt III had the highest percentage of students attending schools and Belt I had the lowest. The details are given in the following table:

Table II-9.2

THE LITERACY RATES AND POPULATION ATTENDING SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belt</th>
<th>No. of schools</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>% of students to population</th>
<th>No. of literates</th>
<th>% of literates to total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Belts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The literacy data of the surveyed villages, as per 1971 Census of Arunachal Pradesh, is given below:

Table II-9.3

THE LITERACY RATES OF SURVEY VILLAGES AS PER 1971 CENSUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belt</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Literates</th>
<th>% Literates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
94.5% of the people covered in the inquiry belonged to the Scheduled Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. The distribution of the Scheduled Tribes population in the three Belts, as compiled from the Primary Census Abstract of the 1971 Census, is given in the following table:

Table II-2.4

THE SCHEDULED TRIBES POPULATION OF THE SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Belt</th>
<th>Poblitation</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribes Population</th>
<th>% of Scheduled Tribes to total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>1388</td>
<td>1386</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Belts</td>
<td>2776</td>
<td>2624</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pounding of Paddy - Note the workers of different age groups (1 to 3)

Winnowing of Paddy (Belt I)
(Note the house construction and the equipment)
Division of Labour:

Internally, there exists a clean division of labour between the sexes and age groups. The adult males do the hard jobs of cutting, clearing and burning of the jungle, fetching of heavy loads from fields, building of houses and bridges, hunting, marking of cane and bamboo items, and deciding village disputes etc. The females hoe, sow, weed, harvest and take the harvest home. They collect vegetables, fruits, roots and other eatables from the fields and also from the jungles. The women weave. The women are the main economic assets. The remarks made by the Schlippe in the "Shifting Cultivation in Africa", namely that a wife was the main creator of wealth, and that there was a tendency to accumulate wives as there was a tendency to accumulate money in a capitalistic society, apply also to the Survey Villages. This is balanced by the custom of payment of the bride price by the husband's clan, and by the inheritance of women from father to son and from brother to brother if not always as wives at least as addition to the labour strength.

1. (Source: De Schlippe, in Shifting Cultivation in Africa. The Zande System of Agriculture (1956 Page 14).)
The aged males delve in clan and family politics and in deciding socio-economic issues of common interest. The old women look after the children of tender age when the parents are away in the field. The infants tied on back are carried to the fields by the mothers. The young children from ages 6 to 7 help parents in the fields. Scenes of small girls of this age husking paddy, carrying water and firewood are quite common. It is also not uncommon to find old men and women, bent and half blinded by age, toiling in the field under a pouring rain or a blazing sun, on compulsion.

**Occupational distribution**

As per 1971 Census, 60% of the population of the Survey Villages returned themselves as workers. Out of these, 92% worked as cultivators and agricultural labourers by their main activities. In Belt I and Belt II, over 99% of the workers were engaged on agricultural pursuits. In Belt III, only 51% of the workers were agriculturists by their main activities. The workers and non-workers of the Survey Villages are given in the table below:-
The inquiry, however, revealed that 71% of the surveyed population, and not 60% as reported in 1971 Census, were engaged as workers in agricultural operations in the previous agricultural season. Agriculture is not only the way of life but also the very 'life' of the people of the Survey Villages.

Households engaged in cultivation:

90.8% of the total households covered in the inquiry cultivated jhum fields. Nearly 38% of the households were engaged in permanent cultivation.

1. (Source: 1971 Census)

2. Only 8 villages had permanent cultivation fields, whereas there was no permanent cultivation field in the remaining 11 Survey Villages.
About 96% of the households of Belt I did Jhun cultivation, about 90% of the Belt II and about 81% of the Belt III did the same. The possession of the largest per household average of the terraced and the valley bottom lands under sedentary cultivation was found in Belt II. The following table gives the details:

Table II-9,6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Households Cultivating Jhun Fields &amp; Households Engaged in Permanent Cultivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agriculture:

It can broadly be said that the stage of agricultural development in the Survey Villages clearly outlines two prominent economic characteristics. The first of these is its extensive character, that is, the thin-
ness of application of labour and capital on large stretches of land. This factor of production, namely, land is cheap and found most abundantly. Land for Jhum cultivation is plentiful but not labour and equipment. So, the soil is lavishly exploited to derive maximum returns on the limited supplies of labour and capital. Secondly, the people produce in the field and collect from the forest their basic requirements mainly for home consumption. Very little, if any, finds its way to distant markets. The agriculture is at a very primitive level. All agricultural operations are performed with the most simple and primitive tools and implements.

**Cropping Pattern:**

In Jhum lands a mixture of paddy, maize, and millet is grown by rotation. Paddy is grown in the first year as the main crop; the other crops take

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2. There were no nearby markets.

a more important position in the subsequent years. The main crops in the permanently cultivated areas are paddy, maize, and millet. In one instance wheat and mustard were found to have been grown as field crops. Only one crop is usually grown in a year. But a few instances of growing a second crop in winter were also reported, especially in Belt III.

A total of 5213 quintals of rice and 1745 quintals of maize were grown during the year. The small grains (millets) grew best in Belt II. The total production of the small grains was 3310 quintals, almost all of which was used for brewing wine for home consumption. The per capita per day production of grains came to 668 grams. Vegetables, fruits and other food items collected from jungle, fish and meat supplemented the meals of cooked grains. The details are given below:

Table II-9.7

PRODUCTION OF GRAINS IN JHUM AND PERMANENT CULTIVATION (IN QUINTALS) IN THE SURVEY VILLAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cultivation</th>
<th>Rice</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Total grains</th>
<th>Small grains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jhum</td>
<td>1275</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Cultivation</td>
<td>3938</td>
<td>1313</td>
<td>5251</td>
<td>2772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5213</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>6958</td>
<td>3310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As has been stated earlier, the crops are grown mixed. The yield rates of each crop, though shown below separately, should be understood to have been related to the total area under the mixed crop. In Jhum fields, the average yield of all grains harvested was 5.5 quintals per acre as against 4.8 quintals in the permanent cultivations. This finding is in contradiction to the popular belief that WRC/TRC fields yield more than the jhum fields. The details are given below:

Table II-9.8

YIELD RATES OF MAIN CROPS PER ACRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cultivation</th>
<th>Yield rates per acre of the main crops (excluding Rabi Crop)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhum</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Cultivation</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agricultural seasons:

The jungle cutting and burning is start from the month of December and continues till April. In the month of February, the sowing season starts and lasts up to the month of July. From May to June certain crops
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS OF THE SAMPLE VILLAGES

BELT - I.

- HIGI (AXE) (MADE OF IRON 1/2 BREADTH, 9" LENGTH)
- ALAK LOLOM (HAND STICK) (1/2 CIRCUMFERENCE, 1/2 LENGTH)
- RICHIK (DAO)
- UK (CURVED BAMBOO)

BELT - II.

- AILOLO (DAO)
- DAO
- HILO (HOE)
- KNIFE
- KARA (SPADE)
- RICHIK (DAO)
- LEVELLER

BELT - III.

- AXE
- HUT DUT
- DAO
- SMALL KNIFE
- HOE
like early paddies and unripe corn cobs are harvested. There is an apparent lull in the agricultural activities from July to September during which only a few weeding operations are carried out at regular intervals and the standing crop is kept under watch against the wild games and the smaller and the smaller pests including the birds. A number of festivals and 'pujas', all connected with agriculture, are performed during this period. All other pending work is attended to during these months. From October to December, harvesting and carrying the harvest home becomes the main occupation of the people. The respite between the harvesting and starting of the new Jhum cultivation is indeed very short.

**Agricultural implements:**

In the 19 Survey Villages, the cultivation of the land and collection from the jungles was carried out with the minimum of inputs in the form of household labour, saved up grains from the previous year’s harvest as seeds and simple tools. Bare hands and feet, implements made of bamboo, 'Dao' and small knives are the tools used in Belt I. In Belt II and III, however, the people use hoes, 'Khurpis', axes and other iron imple-
SEDENTARY CULTIVATION

The Adi ceremonial harvesting.

Mishmis threshing with modern equipment (Belt III).

An Apatani harvester.

A mid-day meal in the field.
ments. The conventional plough is used in Belt III only. Not a single case of use of a tractor came to light. In fact, in Belt I and II, no one belonging to the Survey Villages had seen a tractor. The sketches of the tools used in all the three Belts are given in a separate plate. A few iron tools are made at home from the flat pieces of iron, purchased mainly from the markets situated in the plains miles away involving a number of days' journey.

Home made baskets are used to carry the harvested grains. Thrashing of the grains is done in an open space with bare hands and feet. However, in Belt III improved thrashing methods were also used. The grains are usually stored in small bamboo and cane made granaries built a little away from the residential parts of the villages to reduce the fire risks.

Livestock Resources:

Livestock plays an important role in the tribal economy. The wealth and the worth of a man is usually reckoned from the number of livestock he has, and his capacity to sacrifice animals. In exchange of livestock he can buy almost everything he requires. The bride price is paid with 'methons', the right of cultivating lands belonging to others can be acquired by sacrificing livestock, mostly 'methon', and by giving a feast with its meat to the owner's clan or community or village, as the case may be. The
'methon' also buy by barter all the daily requirements.

Excepting 14 households (out of 498 households) who did not possess any livestock, all households possessed livestock, mainly 'methons' and cows, pigs, sheep, goats, horses, mules and buffaloes. Poultry keeping is universally practised.

An average household possessed 10 heads of livestock and 18 poultry birds on the whole; the beltwise break-ups of these was 4 and 12 in the Belt I, 15 and 20 in Belt II, and 8 and 23 in Belt III respectively.

Livestock is reared mainly for the purpose of home consumption of meat. During the course of one year, an average household consumed 3.8 livestock and 15 poultry birds. The per capita per annum consumption was 0.7 head of livestock and 2.7 birds reared at home, supplemented by animals and birds hunted down in the jungle.

There was a loss of one head of livestock per capita per annum through natural death. Based on the general observation, it can be said that in most of the cases the dead animals were eaten whether they were butchered or hunted down or found dead and decomposed. However, no question was asked during the inquiry to ascertain whether the bodies of the animals who died of disease etc., were
eaten; therefore, the above statement remains unconfirmed.

The skins and the hides of the animals were mostly eaten along with the flesh. The animals are not flayed. They cut the joint with the skins on. After burning the hairs on a direct fire, the joints are cooked and consumed, skin and all. In a few cases the skins are preserved and used as mats for sitting upon or for making bags to carry tobacco, flint, flint wool, matches etc. Drums and other like musical instruments are also made from the skins. No skin or higes were sold or exchanged in the market.

Dependence and Forests:

The villagers depend heavily on jungles. They not only collect wood, thatch, bamboo, cane, and wooden poles for building their houses, bridges etc. but also collect a number of food items from the jungle. The maximum dependence on jungle products, (for food as well as non-food items) is shown by Belt I, and the least by Belt II. The nearness of roads and markets to Belt III has enhanced the rate of collection of bamboos, cane and jungle vegetables for sale or exchange.
The roads are built in Belt II and III only. One road in each district reaches beyond Belt II by a few kilometres. It can be said that Belt I remained practically unconnected by road.

In Belt I, 4 villages were situated beyond the average distance of 81 kilometres from the nearest road, and no village had a road within 20 kilometres from the village. In Belt II, 6 villages out of 8 surveyed, had road within 20 kilometres. Out of the 3 villages in Belt III, two were situated on the road heads and one within 20 kilometres of a road. No one owned any transport vehicle except one bullock cart owned by one family in Belt III. The following table gives some of the details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belt</th>
<th>Number of Villages Within 0-10</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21-40</th>
<th>41-60</th>
<th>61-80</th>
<th>81+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| All Belts | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 19 |

Table II-9.9

D I ST A N C E S O F V I L L A G E S F R O M R O A D H E A D I N K I L O M E T R E S
From a distant market - Note the overgrown jeep road.

Firewood and Bamboo collected from jungle.

Household possessions (Belt III).

Setting of a village.
Market Facilities:

There was no organised market near to any of the Survey Villages excepting in Belt III where the markets were situated in the Assam State at a comparatively short distance from the villages. On the whole, it can be said that the regular marketing facilities were not available to the Survey Villages. There were a few places where a number of shops existed and where the purchase and sale of a few items of daily use took place. Hence the word 'Market' in the parlance of the Survey villages refers to a place where a few individuals buy and sell and not to an organised market as understood commonly.

On an average the markets are available to the villages at a distance of 40 kilometres to 65 kilometres for Belt I, upto 27 kilometres for Belt II and about 8 kilometres for Belt III. The maximum distance of a Survey Villages from an organised market was found to be 240 kilometres. None of the villages sold any food surplus in any 'market'.

All exchange, sales and transactions are usually carried out within the village. Very rarely people sell their meagre surplus of small grains or jungle collections outside the village. Placed in this position, the villages

1. North-Lakhimpur market in Assam State is the nearest main market.
can be said to be the 'micro-universe' of the economy, and the household the 'micro-economic unit': the women of the household form the main pillars of the 'micro-economic unit'.

**Trade and Commerce:**

Most of the merchandise were sold or bartered within the village except in Belt III. The items of sale were millets, livestock (mostly methons, pigs and cows) and poultry. Some items made of cane and bamboo found their way outside the villages. The items purchased consisted of livestock, poultry, utensils, lanterns, tea leaves, sugar, daos and clothes. All the villages did not report sale or purchase with money. In Belt I, the amount of money inducted into the economy is still meagre and the same has not yet replaced the barter transactions. In the absence of markets and transport facilities, the people in Belt I almost entirely rely upon their own self-sufficiency (or rather 'self-insufficiency') generated within the village economy. Very small amounts of goods and services are sold for profit. In some cases, the money value of the things bartered was imputed at the prices prevailing in the district headquarters. On the whole, the goods worth
Rs. 28.64 per capita were sold or bartered and goods worth Rs. 6.5 per capita were purchased.

Amenities available in the Survey Villages:

No village had electricity, a hospital or a dispensary. One village had an improved arrangement for water supply. The remaining 18 villages depended upon stream water.

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